

O R 290641Z OCT 87  
FM AMCONSUL MADRAS  
TO AMEMBASSY NEW DELHI IMMEDIATE  
AMEMBASSY COLOMBO IMMEDIATE  
SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 7502  
INFO AMCONSUL BOMBAY  
AMCONSUL CALCUTTA

C O N F I D E N T I A L MADRAS 3111

1E. 012356: DECL: OADR  
TAGS: PREL PGOV IN CE  
SUBJECT: LTTE: MADRAS VIEWS AND MISCELLANEEY

REF: MADRAS 3108

11. (C) - ENTIRE TEXT

12. SUMMARY: CANADIANS FIND LTTE HAS LITTLE SYMPATHY HERE AND IS NOT EXPECTED TO BECOME ACTIVE AGAIN IN TAMIL NADU. POLICE COMMISSIONER BELIEVES THERE ARE STILL 3,000 LTTE MEN IN TAMIL NADU, MOST WITH WEAPONS OF SOME KIND. ACCORDING TO S. RAMACHANDRAN, CHIEF MINISTER MGR IS "OK" AND RETURNING OCTOBER 31. END SUMMARY.

13. CANADIAN DEPUTY HIGH COMMISSIONER GARY SMITH AND IMMIGRATION COUNSELOR DEL MCKAY SHARED WITH US THE RESULTS OF THEIR THREE-DAY VISIT TO MADRAS AND ENVIRONS. PAIR SAID THEIR TALKS CONFIRMED "REAL MADRAS DISINTEREST" IN THE LTTE, THOUGH NOTING (AS OTHER OBSERVERS HAVE) THAT FULL-SCALE SLAUGHTER OF LTTE COULD INCREASE TENSION. POLICE AND COMMISSIONER DEVARAM TOLD THEM THAT THE GOVERNMENT (GOTN) ESTIMATES THERE ARE STILL 3,000 LTTE MEMBERS IN TAMIL NADU AND THAT MOST OF THEM HAVE AT LEAST RETAINED THEIR SIDEARMS, IF NOT OTHER WEAPONS. NEITHER POLICE NOR GOVERNMENT OFFICIALS EXPECT LTTE TO BECOME ACTIVE HERE AGAIN. SMITH ADDED THAT SEVERAL POLICE OFFICIALS APPEARED EAGER TO CRACK DOWN ON THEM IF THEY DID (THIS SQUARES WITH OUR READINGS, TOO).

14. HOME SECRETARY T. VENKATRAMAN SEEMED VERY RELAXED OVER THE RECENT SPATE OF DMK, DK AND OTHER ARRESTS WHICH HAVE NETED ABOUT 7,000 PEOPLE (SEE ALSO REFTTEL). ABOUT 400 OF THE LEADERS HAVE BEEN TRANSFERRED TO A PRISON "OUTSIDE" MADRAS WHERE THEY WILL BE HELD FOR A FEW DAYS TO COOL OFF. SMITH ADDED THAT VENKATRAMAN CERTAINLY WASN'T GOING TO STAY LATE AT THE OFFICE TO FOLLOW THE MATTER AND CITED THIS AS AN EXAMPLE OF THE KIND OF RELAXED VIEW HELD BY MOST GOTN OFFICIALS THEY SPOKE WITH.

15. CANADIANS SAW FOOD MINISTER S. RAMACHANDRAN (RAM) EVENING OCTOBER 28. RAM CONFIRMED TODAY'S PRESS REPORTS THAT MGR WILL RETURN TO MADRAS MID-MORNING OCTOBER 31 VIA BOMBAY. RAM SAID MGR WAS "OK, BUT PRESSED AS TO WHETHER HE WAS "HEALTHY," SAID NO.

STEMPEL